

# The Brethren Evangelist,

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## THE REVIVAL MEETING.

It is not our purpose at this time to say any thing for or against the so called "revival meeting." Taking it for granted that a season of special revival services once or twice a year, are a proper thing and productive of good, the question which now claims our attention is, who shall conduct these special services in the church, the pastor or some one else?

At a certain season of the year, the members of a congregation conclude to have a revival meeting to continue, two, three or four weeks as time and circumstances will allow. Accordingly the time is arranged for, and then comes the question, Who shall hold the meeting? Whom shall we get? Where can we find a man who will suit us? These questions are discussed in the presence of the pastor who is too modest to offer himself for the work. The merits and demerits of certain available men are considered, a selection is made, the minister sent for, a meeting is held, the church greatly revived and souls converted. Now was this the right thing to do? In nine cases out of ten it was a mistake on the part of the church. Why, some one asks, surely much good was done, and who shall find fault? We know it is the popular idea that to have a successful revival meeting it is necessary to call in outside help, but we will give our reason for believing that the plan above described is not the proper course to pursue.

*First.* It is an injustice to your pastor. He had labored hard, sowing in tears, the good seed of the word, and at harvest time you have denied him the joy of reaping the fruits of his own sowing. Naturally one feels encouraged when the work of his hands prospers. There is inspiration and encouragement in success. That which one has begun he loves to finish. The supreme satisfaction, the highest joy, is in the completion of one's work. Your pastor spent six months, perhaps a whole year, or even more in preparing the way for a glorious ingathering, but alas! that which would give him the keenest joy and sweetest delight, is denied him. Another

steps in and in three weeks gathers more into the church than the pastor did in a whole year. The members and people of the community conclude that their minister lacks in efficiency and should have another. The truth is, with the same amount of effort on the part of the members, the pastor would have succeeded equally well with the "stranger," perhaps better. You have done an injustice to your pastor, to the church and to the cause in general.

*Second.* You rob the pastor of an influence which he cannot afford to lose. The people who come into the church under the pastor's preaching, whether during seasons of special revival work, or the common, daily ministration of the word, grow into his affections as they will in no other way. He is nearer to them, they are nearer to him. The boys and girls whom you taught in the Sunday-school, who Sabbath after Sabbath, have listened to the message of divine truth, as it came from your heart and lips, whom you have baptized, led by the hand into full fellowship, whom you have helped in hours of trial and temptation—these have learned to love you, they look to you as their teacher and spiritual counsellor. Can a pastor afford to lose this influence over his members by securing another to do the very thing the doing of which binds pastor and people so close together? The pastor, the church, the cause of Christ cannot afford it.

*Third.* Your minister is paid but a small salary on which to keep his family. Perhaps you owe him two month's salary. His wife finds it hard to clothe and feed the little ones. The stranger who comes in to hold your meeting feasts on the "fat of the land," and you pay him more for two weeks' work than you pay your pastor for a whole month. Is it fair? Is it right? The "stranger" leaves with the money, the glory and the hearts and affections of at least some of the people, while the pastor settles down to harder work than ever to keep the members who came into the church under excitement. It is unfair, brethren. If you have a regular pastor tell him that he is your first choice to conduct your revival services, and then stand by him as you would stand by another minister if he were to hold your meeting, and the chances are that in the end you will have greater and more lasting results. Brethren Mackey, Koontz, Talley, Liven-good, Bowman, Summers, Shively, Bole, McFaden, and a host of others have time and again demonstrated the truthfulness of what we say and will we believe appreciate the remarks here made.

## OUR LITERATURE.

In two previous issues we have remarked on the importance of the church controlling a literature of its own. The influence of a strong church literature cannot be overestimated. The numerically strong churches of the land, have found their literature one of the most potent factors or means in the propagation of their faith. Papers, books and tracts, scattered by the thousands, have been productive of an immense amount of good. In numbers, in educational and other institutions, in organization, the Brethren church is yet in its formative period. Plans are being outlined and systems of work organized. Sunday-schools are increasing in numbers, Young People's societies are springing up everywhere, the sisters are organizing under the name of S. S. C. E. for more thorough, systematic and united effort. These various societies and institutions need a strong literature to support and advertise them.

The two enterprises to which the church should now direct its attention and for the success of which, concentrate its efforts, are *Ashland University* and *the publishing interests* of the church. The school has its claims upon our people. It is now certain of success, and every member of the church should give it substantial support. Its management is in the hands of careful business men, and its present instructors are men of ability and strong christian character. The publishing interests of the church have been united under one management, and every department of the work should have the financial support and encouragement of all who feel an interest in the cause of the Brethren church, which, we believe to be the cause of Christ. The departments of our publishing interests or literature may be outlined as follows:

1. The Church Paper—Brethren Evangelist.
2. Young People's Paper—King's Children.
3. The Sunday-school Literature,
  - a. Brethren Quarterly.
  - b. Youth's Quarterly.
  - c. The Sunday-school Teacher.
  - d. Cheering Words, weekly.
  - e. Our Little Folks, weekly.
4. The Tract Work.

We shall make a special effort to interest our people in these different lines of literature. Three years ago, we had but the church paper—BRETHREN EVANGELIST. Now we have a Young people's paper, and five different Sunday-school publications. This looks like growth.